

**Claims:**

1. A computer system comprising:

a first plurality of client computer entities; and

a second plurality of computer entities connected logically into a group in which:

a said computer entity is designated as a master computer entity;

at least one of said computer entities is designated as a slave computer entity; and

said slave computer entity comprises an agent component for allocating functionality provided by said slave computer entity to one or more users operating said client computer entities served by said group of computer entities, wherein said agent component operates to automatically allocate said slave computer functionality by:

creating a plurality of user accounts, each said user account providing an amount of computing functionality to an authorised user;

selecting a said slave computer entity and allocating said user account to said slave computer entity; and

allocating to each said user account an amount of computing functionality provided by a said slave computer entity.

2. An account balancing method for selecting a server computer entity for installation of a new user account to supply functionality to a client computer entity, said method comprising the steps of:

identifying at least one said server computer entity capable of providing functionality to said client computer entity;

5 performing at least one test to check that said identified server computer entity is suitable for providing functionality to said client computer entity;

if said server computer entity is suitable for providing said functionality, then opening a user account with said selected server computer entity, said user  
10 account assigning said functionality to said client computer entity.

3. The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said step of identifying at least one computer entity comprises:

15 running a uniqueness check amongst a plurality of said server computer entities aggregated in a group.

4. The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said step of identifying at least one computer entity comprises:

20 identifying which of a plurality of computers in a group are valid computer entities to hold a new account.

5. The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said step of identifying  
25 at least one computer entity comprises:

comparing a sub-network address of at least one server computer entity in a group with a sub-network address of a said client computer.

30 6. The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein:

selecting any server computer entity within a group, regardless of its sub-  
5 network address.

selecting a server computer entity having a maximum available data storage space.

5 installing an agent onto a selected computer entity, said agent handling a  
said user account for said client computer entity.

determining a sub-network address of a client computer for which an account is to be provided by at least one said computer entity of said group;

opening an account for said client computer on a said selected computer  
0 entity having a same sub-network address.

10. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said step of selecting a grouped computer entity further comprises the steps of:

5 selecting a said grouped computer entity on the basis of maximum available data storage space.

11. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said step of selecting said grouped computer entity comprises:

10 randomly selecting one of a set of said grouped computer entities having a same sub-network address as said client computer.

12. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein said step of setting up an account on said selected grouped computer entity comprises:

15 directing an executable file to said selected grouped computer entity, said executable file operating to execute set up of a user account for said client computer on said selected grouped computer entity.

20 13. A plurality of computer entities configured into a group, said plurality of computer entities comprising:

at least one master computer entity controlling configuration of all computer entities within said group;

25 a plurality of slave computer entities, which have configuration settings controllable by said master computer entity;

30 an aggregation service application, said aggregation service application configured to receive application settings from at least one application program,

and distribute said application configuration settings across all computer entities within said group for at least one application resident on said group.

14. The method as claimed in claim 13, wherein:

5 said master computer entity comprises a master application, said master application having a set of master application settings;

10 at least one slave application, resident on a corresponding slave computer entity,

wherein said slave application, is set by said set of master application configuration settings.

15 15. A method of configuring a plurality of applications programs deployed across a plurality of computer entities configured into a group of computer entities, such that all said application programs of the same type are synchronised to be configured with the same set of application program settings, said method comprising the steps of:

20 generating a master set of application configuration settings;

25 converting said set of master application configuration settings to a form which are transportable over a local area network connection connecting said group of computer entities;

receiving said master application configuration settings at a client computer of said group; and

30 applying said master application configuration settings to a client application resident on said client computer within said group.

16. The method as claimed in claim 15, wherein:

5 a said master application configuration setting comprising a setting selected from the set:

an international time setting;

10 a default data storage capacity setting;

an exclude setting;

a user rights settings;

15 a data file definition setting;

a schedule setting;

20 a quota setting;

a log critical file setting.

17. A computer system comprising:

25 a plurality of computer entities connected logically into a group in which:

a said computer entity is designated as a master computer entity;

30 at least one of said computer entities is designated as a slave computer entity; and

said master computer entity and said at least one slave computer entity each comprise a corresponding respective application program, wherein a common set of application configuration settings are applied to a master said application program on said master computer entity, and a slave said application  
5 program on said slave computer entity.

18. A computer device comprising:

at least one data processor;

at least one data storage device capable of storing an applications program;

an operating system;

a user application capable of synchronizing to a common set of application  
10 configuration settings;

an aggregation service application, capable of interfacing with said user application, for transmission of said user application configuration settings  
15 between said user application and said aggregation service application.

19. The computer device as claimed in claim 18, wherein said user application communicates said user application configuration settings with said aggregation service application via a set of API calls.  
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20. The computer device as claimed in claim 18, wherein said user application comprises a master user application, which sends a set of common application configuration settings to said aggregation service applications.  
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21. The computer device as claimed in claim 20, wherein said user application comprises a slave application, which receives a set of application  
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configuration settings from said aggregation service application, and applies those application configuration settings to itself.

22. A method of aggregation of a plurality of computer entities, by  
5 deployment of an agent component, said agent component comprising:

a user application;

an aggregation service application;

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said method comprising the steps of: loading a plurality of application configuration settings into said user application within said agent;

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defining a sub-group of computer entities to be created by said agent and loading data defining said sub-group into said agent;

sending said agent component to a plurality of target computer entities of said plurality of computer entities;

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within each said target computer entity, said agent installing said user application and said aggregation of service application, and deploying said application configuration settings within said target computer entity.

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23. A method for transfer of user accounts between a plurality of computer entities within a group of said computer entities, said method comprising the steps of:

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monitoring a utilisation of each of a set of said computer entities within said group to locate a computer entity having a capacity which is utilised at above a pre-determined limit;



searching for a computer entity within said set which has a capacity utilisation below a second pre-determined limit;

5 selecting at least 1 user account located on said computer entity having said utilised capacity above said first pre-determined limit; and

10 transferring said at least one selected user account from said computer entity having capacity utilisation above said first pre-determined limit to said selected computer entity having utilisation below said second pre-determined limit.

24. The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said, computer having capacity utilised below said second pre-determined limit is selected on the basis of:

15 said second pre-determined limit comprising a new user capacity limit, designating a number of users which can be accommodated on said computer entities; and

20 an actual number of users located on said computer entity is below said new user capacity limit.

25 25. The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein, said step of finding said computer entity having capacity utilisation above a first pre-determined limit comprises:

monitoring a data storage capacity of each of said plurality of computer entities within said set;

5           26.    The method as claimed in claim 23, wherein said step of selecting  
          at least one user account for transfer comprises randomly selecting said user  
          account.

2.0 a user account comprises:

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